

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISTANB 00085 080725Z
ACTION MCT-01

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FM AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8440
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS ISTANBUL 0085

E. O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINS
SUBJ: TERRORISM: DEATH OF AMCIT HAROLD ROSENTHAL

REF: STATE 309302

1. CONGEN IS POUCHING MATERIAL WHICH WE HOPE WILL BE OF ASSISTANCE TO HAROLD ROSENTHAL FAMILY. IN RESONSE TO REQUEST PARA 2 REFTEL, WE ARE SENDING TWO DIAGRAMS OF AIRPORT OBTAINED FROM BACK ISSUES OF ISTANBUL NEWSPAPERS SHOWING LOCATION OF AUGUST 11 TERRORIST ATTACK, AND ONE DIAGRAM OF OUR OWN WHICH SHOWS INTERNATIONAL PASSENGERS TRANSIT LOUNGE AT YESILKOY AIRPORT, SECURITY CHECK POINTS, AND EL AL CHECK-IN COUNTER. WE ARE UNABLE TO OBTAIN COPY OF COURT TRANSCRIPT AS COURTS MAKE AVAILABLE SUCH DOCUMENTS ONLY DIRECTLY TO INTERESTED PARTIES WHO HAVE NEED FOR THEM IN CONNECTION WITH LEGAL ACTION. ROSENTHAL LAWYER, HOWEVER, APPARENTLY CAN OBTAIN ENTIRE COURT FILE BY ENGAGING LEGAL COUNSEL IN ISTANBUL TO ACT WITH POWER OF ATTORNEY. WE ARE INCLUDING " LIST OF ATTORNEYS" FOR ISTANBUL CONSULAR DISTRICT WITH OTHER MATERIAL WE ARE FORWARDING BY POUCH.

2. AS FOR QUESTIONS POSED PARA 4 REFTEL, ALL VERSIONS OF WHAT HAPPENED ON AUGUST 11 AGREE THAT PRIOR TO TERRORIST ATTACK PASSENGERS WERE BEING PROCESSED FOR BOARDING AIRCRAFT. EL AL
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PASSENGERS HAD BEEN CALLED FROM TRANSIT LOUNGE ON SECOND FLOOR OF BUILDING AND HAD DESCENDED TO FIRST FLOOR, WHERE AFTER SECURITY CHECK, THEY WERE TO BOARD AIRPORT BUSES WHICH WOULD TAKE THEM PLANESIDE. AS FAR AS CAN BE DETERMINED THE TWO TERRORISTS HAD ARRIVED VIA ALITALIA FLIGHT FROM ROME AND WHEN EL AL PASSENGERS WERE CALLED, THEY WERE WAITING IN THE INTERNAIONAL LOUNGE IN TRANSIT STATUS (OBSTENSIBLY

TO AWAIT A LATER PAKISTANI AIRLINES FLIGHT, FOR WHICH THEY HELD TICKETS). DETAILS FROM THIS POINT ON ARE UNCLEAR--EVEN EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS DIFFER ON SIGNIFICANT DETAILS--BUT IT APPEARS THAT WHEN EL AL FLIGHT WAS CALLED OVER LOUDSPEAKER SYSTEM, TERRORISTS AT SOME POINT JOINED GROUP OF DEPARTING EL AL PASSENGERS DOWNSTAIRS. AS TERRORISTS APPROACHED AREA OF SECURITY SEARCH BY TURKISH AUTHORITIES ON GROUND FLOOR, THEY BEGAN ASSAULT. PRIOR TO ATTACK, A GOOD MANY OF THE EL AL PASSENGERS AHEAD OF TERRORISTS HAD ALREADY CLEARED SECURITY CHECK. THESE PASSENGERS. AND PERHAPS SOME OF THOSE WHO HAD NOT YET PASSED THE SECURITY SEARCH BUT ESCAPED INJURY OR WERE NOT SERIOUSLY WOUNDED, SUBSEQUENTLY BOARDED THE AWAITING EL AL PLANE WHICH DEPARTED FOR TEL AVIV APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES AFTER THE ATTACK. THE WALL AND COMPARTMENTS WHERE THE SECURITY CHECK IS CONDUCTED MAY HAVE HELPED TO SHIELD THOSE WHO HAD ALREADY PASSED THROUGH.

3. WE ARE UNCERTAIN EXACTLY WHERE THE EL AL PLANE WAS LOCATED WITH REGARD TO THE TERMINAL,BUT IT WAS PARKED SOME DISTANCE AWAY. THOSE PASSENGERS WHO WERE ABLE TO LEAVE ON EL AL MAY HAVE BEEN TAKEN PLANESIDE BY BUS OR, GIVEN THE CONFUSED STATE OF THINGS T THE AIRPORT AFTER THE ATTACK, THEY COULD HAVE WALKED.

4. LAWYER FOR ROSENTHAL FAMILY MAY FIND IT USEFUL TO SEEK EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS FROM AMERICAN CITIZENS PRESENT AT AIRPORT DURING TERRORIST ATTACK. IF DEPARTMENT BELIEVES IT APPROPRIATE AND NOT CONTRARY TO PRIVACY ACT PROVISIONS TO RELEASE SUCH INFORMATION, ISTANBUL 3077 PROVIDES LONG LIST OF UNCLASSIFIED

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AMCITS WHO WERE THERE. THEY ARRIVED ISTNABUL ABOARD EL AL PLANE, AND WERE GOING THROUGH AIRPORT CUSTOMS ON OTHER SIDE OF PARTITION FROM WHERE ATTACK OCCURED. LEADER OF GROUP WAS REV. RICHARD L. ROHRBAUGH, 9750 S.W. TERWILLIGER BLVD.N PORTLAND, OREGON 97219. FOR EYEWITNESS DESCRIPTION OF HOW THOSE WHO REACHED PLANE MANAGED TO SO SO, AND WHEN THEY ACCOMPLISHED THIS, AMONG THOSE WHO DEPARTED ABOARD EL AL PLANE AFTER ATTACK WERE FIVE AMERICAN CITIZENS WHO PERHAPS CAN BE CONTACTED. THEY WERE THE DON MONTOOTH FAMIL (FOUR) AND A MR. P. RUBIN (ISTANBUL 3085, TEL AVIV 5519). CONGEN HAD NO CONTACT WITH THESE PEOPLE, BUT TEL AVIV MAY HAVE FURTHER INFORMATION.

5. CONGEN IS POUCHING MATERIALS PARA 1 TO DEPARTMENT IN ENVELOPE ADDRESSED TO DIRECTOR, EUR/SE FOR TRANSMISSION TO ROSENTHAL FAMILY LAWYER.
OGDEN

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